

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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Liberian refugees flee, take the gospel with them

By Craig Bird

SAN PEDRO, Ivory Coast (BP) — When Charles Taylor's rebel army swept into Liberia in December 1989, an estimated 1.5 million people had to decide what to take with them as they fled over the next 10 months.

Grabbing their children and their money, most traveled light for speed and mobility. Some snatched up a flashlight or a

change of clothes, many a little bit of food.

But a surprising number also carried an intense desire to worship as they hid in the bush, bribed their way past checkpoints and across borders, and sought a place of safety.

Over the past two years Liberian refugees have established 11 Baptist churches just across the

border in Ivory Coast. They are churches with full-fledged Baptist programs — Sunday Schools, Woman's Missionary Unions, men's departments, choirs, Royal Ambassadors for boys, Girls in Action, and youth groups. Scores of people study in Theological Education by Extension classes.

Most have built "temporary" structures with concrete floors.

Carefully tended flowers surround the buildings.

"Nothing can surpass the joy of seeing someone come to Christ, but it's also an incredible thrill to see what these people have done with these churches," said Southern Baptist missionary Margaret Fairburn of Tylertown.

"You see young men standing in a pulpit you never dreamed you'd see preaching. Men who never even taught a Sunday School class in Liberia have organized churches. People who were simple choir members now lead choirs."

Fairburn is a fellow refugee. Her entire 30-year missionary career has been spent in Liberia — except the past two years when she also relocated to Ivory Coast.

Like most of the leaders in the new churches, she suffered the looting of her home in Zwedru, Liberia, where she attended Grace Baptist Church. Like them, she longs and prays to return "home." Like them, she doesn't think a civil war and forced relocation are any reason to halt the work of the church.

So she drives the dirt back roads to minister in places like Toulepleu, Zagne, Guiglo, and Tai, teamed with a Liberian pastor and evangelist.

The churches Fairburn serves have posted healthy numbers — at Toulepleu, 37 baptisms; at Tuambly, 27; at Zagne, 52. United Baptist Church at Tai has baptized more than 100 people.

"They acted like the Jerusalem church," Fairburn noted. "Persecution scattered them and every-

where they've gone, they've started new churches."

Even the mother church back in Liberia is growing again. Led by a deacon who remained, Grace Baptist in Zwedru has baptized 37 people this year — including members of the army that chased so many refugees into Ivory Coast.

The refugees's stories reveal trials enough to test any faith.

"Every one of them has a tragic story," Fairburn said. "Their fear is still real. There are still relatives they haven't heard from. They're still threatened by ethnic hatred. Yet their faith is so strong and real. They're having to lean on God in different ways and they've found him faithful."

The new realities influence their worship. Most sermons deal with forgiveness and steadfastness. The same songs are popular in all the churches: "We're On The Battlefield For My Lord," "I'm Leaning On The Rock That Never Fails," and "We're Pushing Satan Around."

Even more permanent reminders of their plight remain: Caroline Dweh gave birth to a child prematurely as she and her husband Gandy wandered through the Liberian bush to escape. The couple named that daughter Sogansaygue, which translates, "Evil is not necessarily present (now). You do me evil, but I will live to resist."

That could be the name for all the Liberian refugee churches living to resist the evil that led to their creation.

Bird writes for FMB.



Missionary Margaret Fairburn of Tylertown is a fellow refugee with the displaced Liberians she serves in Ivory Coast. Her entire 30-year missionary career has been spent in Liberia — except the past two years when she too relocated to the Ivory Coast. Like most

of them, she suffered the looting of her home in Liberia. Like them, she longs and prays to return "home." But also like them, she doesn't think a civil war and forced relocation should halt the work of the church. (BP photo by Charles Ledford)

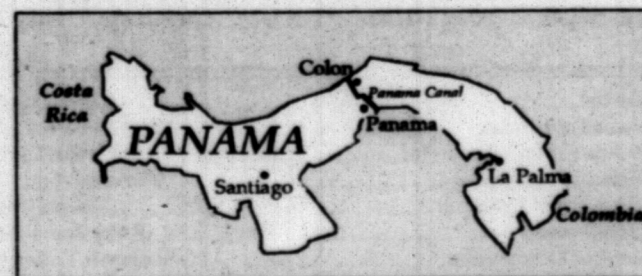
That's show biz

The new fundamentalist Christian character on NBC's racy "L.A. Law" series is no joke, says the producer, William Finkelstein. In an interview with *USA Today*, Finkelstein described the new character, Jane Halliday, as someone who will give the program an opportunity "to introduce a different philosophy into our discussions." He added, "I also felt I'd never seen a character who was genuinely of a deep religious faith who wasn't a foil for a joke or a psychopath. That appealed to me."

Conservative radio personality Rush Limbaugh, normally a bastion of opposition to liberals, has agreed to be the subject of an interview in the December issue of *Playboy* magazine. Asked why he went along with the idea of appearing in a pornographic magazine which actively endorses liberal sex and legal drug use, Limbaugh said, "I can think of no better place to have views such as mine — which are the epitome of morality and virtue — published ... It is as that great man Jesus Christ said: 'You go to where the sinners are.'"

Kidnappers contacted

New Tribes Mission once again established radio contact in October with the kidnappers of three of their missionaries, taken hostage in January from a village in Panama. The organization requested information about the well-being of the three men, and were told they were fine. The kidnappers indicated they would contact New Tribes again. The kidnapping has been a roller coaster ordeal for the organization, with on-again/off-again contact concerning the safety of the hostages and the terms for their release. New Tribes recently observed a special day of prayer for the missionaries.



Looking Back...

10 years ago

Messengers to the 148th session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention pass resolutions strongly condemning the use of gambling and lottery as means of raising state revenue, calling such proposals "unacceptable, impractical, and irresponsible."

20 years ago

The Christian Life Commission, concerned that religious leaders are not being consulted by government officials, warn that the worsening energy crisis has led the federal government to consider curtailment of Sunday automobile use.

50 years ago

At the end of a rather lengthy Sunday night sermon, pastor Bilbo Lively of Buchanan Church in Pontotoc County calls the congregation into business session to propose joining *The Baptist Record Every Family Plan*. Church members, anxious to get home before midnight, agree with the idea.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

Seeing our best

Eyes alone do not make us see. They are only the instruments of sight. There is a difference between seeing, looking, and really seeing. Isaac Newton is reported to have said that the only difference between himself and other men was that he looked more, and therefore saw more. So much of our seeing is filtered through the mind, and there can become blurred and distorted, or sharp and clear.

Our Lord commented on this phenomenon: "And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and they which see might be made blind" (John 9:39). Jesus had just healed a blind man and some Pharisees there heard Jesus say, "We see (you say) therefore your sin remaineth."

Jesus was far more interested in people than in rules, laws, regulations, or denominations. How terribly easy it is to see the speck in a brother's eye and ignore the two-by-four in your own eye.

The Thanksgiving-Christmas season makes it most difficult to see aright. Blinded are the ones

who gaze with deep fascination at the tinsel and the glitter. Mission giving should be strong on our minds, but tradition takes a heavy toll on our wallets. Dare we pray, "Lord, help me truly see!"

David Livingstone wrote, "I will open a way to the interior (of Africa) or perish." Hudson Taylor said, "I feel as if I could not live if something is not done for China." How well they could see!

It is said that the manger was the first mission giving box. An anonymous donor from Mississippi recently gave \$1 million to the mission enterprise... Jesus came that they which see not, might see.

Relationships will last longer and pay the highest dividends of all our investments. The relationship with God through Christ Jesus gives eternal life. Relationships with our fellowman, parents, children, husband-wife, fellow workers, and friends are seed-beds of broken relationship. They need to be mended. Forgiveness is the commandment; love prepares the way.

Deborah Brunt (of Corinth) in her book, *Things Fail, People*

Fail, observes we have three hurts to face: (1) hurts you have caused others, (2) people who have hurt you, and (3) problems that breed hurt. "Speaking the truth in love" and "overcome evil with good" are the suggested guidelines for healing hurts.

Wandering in the wilderness for 40 years is not recommended for contentment. Bruce Larson tells of a guide, hired by hunters to take them into the backwoods of Maine. They became hopelessly lost and began to doubt the competency of their guide. "You said you were the best guide in Maine," they reminded him. "I am," he said, "but I think we are in Canada now."

We can wander 'til the day we die, never seeing the really important things of life. Giving a ton of toys, not needed and seldom appreciated, cannot outweigh the solid look of that which is really important. Think of Jesus saying all of this in one lovely sentence: "You shall love God with all your heart... and love your neighbor as you love yourself."

Observe Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions —

Lottie Moon continues to give through offering in her name

By Randall L. Von Kanel

As the darkness fell on that cold Christmas Eve, 1912, Lottie Moon breathed her last, and a missions legacy of faith and commitment was born. Her death, due in large part to her own Christmas gift — the giving of her life for a world that needed Jesus — greeted the Christmas morn with a silent witness to the joy of giving back to the One who gave the greatest gift of all. Missions was her life, and missions was the grand lady's plea. She called for others to give to the world missions task out of the personal milieu of her love for China and a single-minded commitment to her Lord.

Lottie was a first-century believer living in a 19th-20th century world. She "risked her life for the gospel" as she "first gave of herself." Her life was a testimony of the biblical truth: "To whom much is given, much is required." Though by our standards today she did not have much, yet much she gave. Through her life, missions gave back to missions! She called for

mission support, and she gave in return. She asked for no commitment from others that she was not willing to make herself.

Lottie Moon is still giving! Yes, through the annual witness and call of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering many are giving in response to God's call through her life! But, Lottie Moon is also giving! Those mission fields which have received much are now giving much, even as she did! Lottie Moon land, the land of missions and churches that were established through the help of FMB missionaries and the funds of the annual Christmas offering, is responding now with gifts to missions. From Brazil and Korea to the isles of the Caribbean, through large and small gifts, missions giving is happening on the mission field.

One example of mission field giving stands out! The First Baptist Church of Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands, BWI, gave more than \$18,000 to the 1992 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. Foreign Mission Board work began

in Grand Cayman in the summer of 1977, when missionaries Herbert and Jackie Neely arrived. From the start, the church embraced the call of ministry and missions. By the time the Neelys retired and left the island in 1992, First Baptist Church had become a strong, self-supporting congregation.

Christmas month, 1992, witnessed a miracle of giving as the church family responded sacrificially by God's power and provision. With a church membership at that time of just under 300 and an average Sunday School attendance of 220, the people responded with the over-and-above gift of CI\$15,600 — the US dollar amount of \$18,540. Considering the church family had just taken a special building fund offering the previous month, the figure represents even more a testimony to God's grace.

The miracle of love and faith that marked the life of Lottie Moon has found a contemporary expression in the life of this congregation. FBC, Cayman,



READY TO GO — Missionary Dirce Cooper (center right) and members of the seminary choir wait on Sunday morning to go to nearby First Baptist Church of Siquirres, Costa Rica. The choir spent the weekend at the El Eden Baptist Camp to assist with a music workshop and sing in nearby churches. They gave concerts in three different places the previous evening. (FMB photo by Don Rutledge)

CHANGE THE WORLD NOW!
Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions
Nov. 28-Dec. 5, 1993
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering
National Goal: \$85 million

THE FRAGMENTS

Think of these things

In England, a Mr. Atherton died, having given more than \$5 million in his lifetime to foreign missions. In his coat pocket was a yellowed letter from a missionary in China who wrote, "If I were back in England I'd make the floor my bed, a box my chair, and another box my desk in order to support our mission work."

W.O. Vaught Jr., a Mississippi-an and long-time pastor of Immanuel Church in Little Rock, told of the death of his father. He told the family, "I'm penniless. I had \$25, but I gave it all to the Lottie Moon missionary offering."

believes that it, too, has been given much, and so, it wants to give. As the SBC churches gear up for another Lottie Moon season of giving, may the inspiration of mission field giving call for the truly sacrificial gift of all who have been given much!

Missions giving is happening wherever Lottie Moon has walked. She once made a difference on the sand and rock of this tiny Caribbean island; she gives

Art Mouw of Borneo believes that missions does not depend on the church for survival; but rather the church depends on missions. Owen Cooper said it, too: "Missions is the fuel upon which the church must run."

Someone asked Charles Spurgeon, famed London preacher, if he thought those who never heard the gospel would be lost anyway. Spurgeon replied, "For me, the question is not, are the heathen lost without the gospel? Rather, am I saved if I have the gospel and fail to share it with others?"

— GH

now out of a heart of thanksgiving for those who have given and for the One who gave his life! It's Christmas in the Caymans, and Lottie Moon is giving again! Merry Christmas, and "thank you for giving to the Lord, for we are the lives that have been changed."

Randy Von Kanel, pastor of First Church, Grand Cayman, was formerly pastor of First Church, Hattiesburg.

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Editor.....Guy Henderson
Associate Editor.....William H. Perkins Jr.
Advertising/News writer.....Teresa Dickens
Editorial Associate.....Florence Larrimore
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State conventions debate definition of cooperation

SAVANNAH, Ga. (ABP)—A decision by a state Baptist nominating committee to make support of the Cooperative Program a qualification for leadership has sparked a full-blown polity debate in Georgia.

Messengers to the Georgia Baptist Convention, meeting Nov. 15-17 in Savannah, voted to appoint a committee to study what it means to be "in harmony and cooperation with the work and the purpose" of the state convention, their constitution's only requirement for membership.

The motion, by Floyd Roebuck,

pastor of First Church, Rome, emerged from a dispute over a guideline used to determine who would be nominated to serve on state convention boards and committees.

Prior to the convention, the nominating committee decided to recommend for leadership positions only members of churches which contribute a minimum of 7% of their unrestricted receipts through the Cooperative Program, the unified funding mechanism for both the state and Southern Baptist conventions, said nominating committee chairman John Yarbrough.

The 7% guideline was adopted after it was learned that members of the SBC Executive Committee represent churches averaging 7.23% in Cooperative Program giving. The average of all SBC churches is 9.3%.

Roebuck, whose church gives money to the state convention but also sends a portion of its funds to the SBC-rival Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, charged that the committee's criteria disqualified "over half" of Georgia Baptist churches.

Georgia was not the only state where Baptists debated the basis for their cooperation. Virginia

Baptists decided not to require churches to contribute money to their state convention in order to participate in it. Some conservative churches have been bypassing the state coffers by sending all their missions money to the SBC. But the constitutional amendment narrowly failed to get the required two-thirds vote.

A related measure also failed, one that would have initiated a study of the term "cooperation" as used in the constitution to define membership.

A handful of states passed resolutions affirming the Cooperative

Program and urging churches to increase their giving.

Oklahoma Baptists went one step further, passing a resolution denouncing alternative funding methods that "have the effect of weakening the Cooperative Program" and SBC work. The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship was lambasted by the state convention president.

A similar slap at the Fellowship was debated at length in Tennessee, but messengers eventually defeated an amendment to a resolution that would have discouraged participation with the Fellowship.



Bill Causey (left), executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, presents a mounted gavel to W.W. Walley (center) of Waynesboro, in honor of his two terms as president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Walley's wife, Eletha, looks on as her husband accepts the plaque. The presentation was made Nov. 17 at the conclusion of the 158th session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. (Photo by Tim Nicholas)

Russian constitution draft guards religious freedom, human rights

MOSCOW (BP) — If Russian citizens vote Dec. 12 for President Boris Yeltsin's proposed new constitution, laws such as one passed earlier this year to restrict evangelical growth would be unconstitutional.

Parts of the document guarantee religious liberty and affirm the right of foreign missionaries to operate. The proposed constitution would:

— Protect human rights in general. It promises that human rights as defined by commonly recognized international norms belong to every person from birth, and will determine how laws are enforced. It guarantees equality under the law and denies special restrictions of human rights regardless of a citizen's religious conviction. It also forbids local governments from passing laws denying or belittling such rights.

— Protect religion specifically. It guarantees freedom of conscience, the right to profess any or no religion, and freedom to spread religious beliefs. However, it also forbids propaganda claiming one religion is superior to another. The intent of the latter provision apparently is to prevent establishment of a state religion, such as Russian Orthodoxy.

— Give foreigners (including missionaries) the same rights as Russians except where forbidden by international treaty.

Despite Yeltsin's recent victories over hardliners, the constitution has no guarantee of passing. Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar warned Nov. 22 that a "propaganda war" with opponents could defeat the document. He called on regional officials to convince voters to back the constitution.

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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No prayer, no principal at Jackson's Wingfield High

The student council of Wingfield High School, Jackson, recently voted 490 to 96 for student-led prayer, with 413 abstaining. On Nov. 9 the student body president read the prayer, "Almighty God, we ask that you bless our parents, teachers, and country throughout the day. In your name we pray. Amen."

This prayer was read over the school's intercom by a student for three consecutive days. Principal Bishop Knox was put on an indefinite administrative leave and the city of Jackson is in an uproar.

The Mississippi Baptist Convention approved in a resolution the voluntary prayer and commended students and the principal.

On Nov. 23, several state legislators held a news conference to show support for Knox and Wingfield students. Knox was fired as principal on Nov. 24 for "insubordination" and not the prayer issue, said school officials. "School doesn't have a prayer — or a principal" reported USA Today.

A rally was held on the steps of the State Capitol building to protest the firing. The governor of

the state, Kirk Fordice, along with many Baptists, was in the group.

Many groups and churches have contacted the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission requesting information on what they can do. The commission, under the direction of Paul Jones, made the following suggestions:

1. Pray for the students, administration, and others involved in this issue.

2. Use the Equal Access Law to establish student-initiated and student-led prayer and Bible clubs. This law provides for students to initiate and lead Bible Clubs, prayer groups, or other religious activities in public school facilities.

3. Urge the schools to hold holiday assemblies. While the First Amendment prohibits the preferring of one religion over another, it does defend the right to exercise religion freely.

4. Encourage the holding of student-initiated, student-led prayer at graduation ceremonies.

5. Identify religious beliefs through signs and symbols. Attractive and tastefully-worn religious symbols can make a

strong statement.

6. Work to eliminate school policies which violate the United States Constitution or Supreme Court decision.

7. Do research papers, speeches, and projects on religious themes.

8. Assert the right to be exempt. Students should assert the right to be exempt from activities and class content that contradicts their religious beliefs.

9. Assert the right to meet with school officials.

10. Secure and distribute the Students' Bill of Rights.

Most Baptists do not believe that Christians are the only ones to be heard in a public forum, but do hold that Christians have a right to be heard in a public forum as do others who would seek the free exercise of their religion.

Call the Christian Action Commission of the Mississippi Baptist Convention at (601) 968-3800 for more information, or to obtain a copy of the Students' Bill of Rights (10¢ per copy).

Tylertown native will serve 2 years with ISC

Stacy O'Quin has been appointed by the Foreign Mission Board to a two-year term with the International Service Corps volunteer Journeyman program.

She left Aug. 1 to begin service through the FMB as a teacher to missionary children in the Philippines.

O'Quin is a native of Tyler-

town and a 1993 graduate of Mississippi College. Her home church is Tylertown Church; she is a member of Horizon Church, Jackson.

O'Quin is the daughter of James M. and Patricia O'Quin. Her address on the field is P.O. Box 20, Mati, Davao Oriental, 8200 Philippines.



O'Quin



Rush hour

Registration workers for the Mississippi Baptist Convention operate full throttle Nov. 16 to move messengers into the sanctuary of First Church, Jackson, for the opening session of the convention's 158th annual meeting. A total of 1,177 messengers signed in for the first session, with a final count of 1,817 messengers at the close of registration. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Congress works to reduce crime

WASHINGTON (ABP) — Lawmakers determined to curb escalating violence across the country grappled with several anti-crime initiatives in the waning days of the first session of the 103rd Congress.

Working over the Nov. 19-21 weekend, both chambers approved a comprehensive crime bill, as well as a measure that would impose a nationwide waiting period for handgun purchases. Legislators also approved measures designed to curb violence at abortion clinics and domestic violence against women.

Both chambers approved different versions of the omnibus crime legislation (H.R. 3355), but the bill will not be ready for President Clinton's signature until next year. The Senate-House conference committee was not expected to iron out the differences in the bills until Congress returns in January.

By a 95-to-4 vote Nov. 19, the U.S. Senate approved the measure that would authorize more than \$22 billion over five years for a variety of anti-crime initiatives,

including an additional 100,000 police officers and more prisons.

The bill also would ban the production and distribution of semi-automatic assault weapons, providing an exemption for guns used by sportsmen. Another provision would ban so-called "cop-killer bullets" — those that can pierce armor.

Senators also adopted stiffer penalties for terrorism, drug trafficking, spousal abuse, and sexual offenses against women. The bill provides for the death penalty for more than 50 federal offenses, such as killing a police officer or carjackings that result in death.

The Senate incorporated into the overall crime bill a previously free-standing bill (S. 11) designed to protect women from violence. It would impose an array of reforms: new rules of evidence that focus on the offender's conduct rather than the victim's character; funding for battered-women's shelters and a national family-violence hot line; and rape and violence prevention and education initiatives for schools and college campuses.

Second conference set for innovative leaders

ATLANTA — A second conference on innovative church leadership is scheduled for Jan. 3-5 at Houston's Hyatt Regency Hotel.

The first conference of its kind last January attracted more than 1,200 people. Participants called it a "historic meeting" and a "watershed event."

This year's meeting will feature pastors such as Bill Hybels of Willow Creek Community Church near Chicago and Sam Williams of Bay Marin Community Church in San Rafael, Calif.

Tom Wolf, former pastor of the Church on Brady in Los Angeles and currently professor of missions at Golden Gate Seminary, will also speak. Fifty workshops

will provide opportunities for small-group interaction with leaders of innovative churches.

The conference is designed for church planters looking for new ways to reach the unchurched, pastors leading their churches to change, students developing a vision for ministry, denominational leaders working with new style churches, and innovative leaders seeking fellowship.

The conference is coordinated by the Home Mission Board in cooperation with Vision 2000, a network of innovative church leaders. For registration information, contact the Home Mission Board at (404) 898-7730 or Vision 2000 at (213) 728-5731.

Baptists face leadership crisis, Sunday School Board leaders say

By Chip Alford

NASHVILLE (BP) — The evangelical world, and Southern Baptists in particular, are facing a crisis in leadership, two Baptist Sunday School Board leaders said Nov. 18.

"We're in a deadly spiritual warfare over leadership," BSSB President James T. Draper Jr., told state convention leaders gathered in Nashville for annual church administration planning meetings. "And if Satan can get the leaders of the church, he has taken a giant step toward destroying the ministry of the church."

The attack "knows no theological favorites," Draper said, adding conservatives and moderates alike are suffering from the assault. Based on reports from denominational and state convention leaders, he said it is possible "up to 30% of our ministers are either burned out or ready to bail out."

Joe Stacker, director of the board's Church Leadership Department, agreed. In remarks before the same audience he cited

several signs of the problem:

- A majority of Southern Baptist churches are plateaued or declining.

- Approximately 116 SBC church staff members are fired each month — 1,400 a year.

- Individuals and churches as a whole are suffering from a lack of vision and vitality.

- Staff members have no sense of vocational calling.

- Ministers are unwilling to accept their responsibility for the church.

- Congregations are failing to understand their role in the world as defined by the New Testament.

What's the root of the problem?

"Maybe one of the reasons Satan is having a heyday with pastors is that we've created a system where leaders have no accountability," Draper said. "True leadership is given by God. There is no such thing as leadership that is not accountable to (him)."

To show a Christ-like purpose, Stacker said leaders should:

- Keep an eye on the needs of the world.

- Keep a sharp focus of purpose before the ministry and missions education organizations in the church.

- Use outside influencers to challenge church members at least twice a year.

- Preach the Bible as if it were a letter received from God today.

- Preach God's Word carefully, not just a personal interpretation of it.

- Enjoy the church council and committee process, and let the church enjoy its own purpose in Christ.

- Affirm publicly in print and in person those who lead and serve well.

- Value others' opinions and really listen.

- Refrain from letting their personal lifestyle endanger the church's purpose in Christ.

Alford is design editor for Facts and Trends, BSSB.

Highlights of 1993 convention to be aired, available for broadcast

Highlights of the 158th session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention under the theme "Pray Ye Therefore..." will be shown on a number of ACTS and other church cable television systems around the state in early December. "Highlights" will include music, testimonies, and portions of messages

ACTS of Rankin, Brandon

First Church, Bruce

First Church, Calhoun City

ACTS Channel 10, Cleveland

First Church, Greenville

First Church, Hattiesburg

ACTS of Jackson

Lauderdale Baptist ACTS, Meridian

ACTS TV, Laurel

First Church, New Albany

Lee Co. ACTS Board, Tupelo

First Church, Yazoo City

preached.

Videotapes of the Bible treasures and some convention sermons (as well as the convention "Highlights" video) will be available from the Department of Broadcast Services of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205; telephone (601) 968-

Dec. 6 7:30 p.m.

Dec. 8 8 p.m.

TBA

Dec. 8 8:30 p.m.

Dec. 12 9 a.m.

Dec. 9 8 p.m.

TBA

Dec. 5 7:30 p.m.

Dec. 7 Noon

Dec. 9 8 a.m.

Dec. 10 8 p.m.

TBA

Dec. 5 8 p.m.

Dec. 9 Noon

TBA

Dec. 15 6:45 p.m.

TBA

Dec. 12 7 p.m.

Dec. 15 8:30 p.m.

3800) on 1/2-inch VHS for loan by mid-December.

If other churches in the state have access to cable channels, the Broadcast Services Department will loan them 3/4-inch or 1/2-inch videotape for broadcast.

Churches and cable stations scheduled to run the "Highlights" video are listed below.

Rankin Co. Cable

Channel 35

Walco/Bruce-Channel 2

WO7BN LPTV-Channel 7

Vista Communications

Channel 27

Warner Cable, Channel 10

Delta Cablevision, Channel 17

Pinebelt Cable, Channel 6

Capitol Cablevision, Channel 23

Comcast, Channel 39

Comcast Cable, Channel 18

TCI, Channel 13

Comcast Cable, Channel 28

Warner Amex, Channel 10

Carman launches school prayer petition

TULSA, Okla. (EP) — Carman is at the peak of his career as a contemporary Christian musician. So what's Carman doing now?

He's launching a petition drive to bring back prayer in public schools.

Carman has already gathered thousands of signatures, and hopes to gather over a million when the drive begins in earnest this January, coinciding with the release of his new album "The Standard."

"If you look at a graph on violent crime, rape, abortion, teen homicide and suicide, alcoholism, drug use — anything that pertains to national

morality, you'll see that in 1962 the statistics begin to break," he said. "In 1962, 40 different categories of statistics relating to national morality broke, and that trend continues...."

Carman believes the change in American morality can be simplified to a basic cause and effect equation.

"The only thing that happened in 1962 to explain this is that we took prayer out of our public school system," he says. "It was the first time in the history of America that we took a verbal public stand against

God, and everything can be traced back to that event."

Carman acknowledges that his petition drive or his new album aren't designed to win friends in the secular arena. He attributes both to his growth as a Christian and as a musician.

"Now I'm in more of a position of influence, I believe God is opening doors for me to go into the secular world and have an influence there," he said. "...The more I go into a non-Christian environment, the clearer my message of the cross has to be."

Southern Baptists in India mark William Carey's ministry

By Brian Smith

BANGALORE, India (BP) — In November 1793, British pioneer missionary William Carey arrived in Calcutta. In November 1993, Baptists from all over the world gathered in Calcutta to celebrate the 200th anniversary of his arrival.

Although known as the father of the modern missionary movement, Carey wasn't the first missionary in modern times to venture forth from his homeland. He wasn't even the first Protestant missionary to go to India.

Yet his admonition — "Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God" — in founding the Baptist Missionary Society has become the motto for the modern missionary enterprise.

Carey worked in India 41 years, leaving a legacy of ministry and social advances in India and the world alike. Christians celebrate him as the father of modern missions but in India he is also revered as an educator, industrialist, agriculturist, and promoter of social justice.

He founded India's first university, translated the Bible into more than 40 languages, wrote grammar books and dictionaries in Bengali and Sanskrit, and introduced the printing press, steam engine, and savings bank concept.

His five-acre garden at Serampore was considered one of the finest botanical collections in Asia. He fought against the practices of infanticide and suttee, the burning alive of a woman on her husband's funeral pyre. For these and his many other accomplishments, Carey earned the honor of being called "Friend of India."

Yet for all his accomplishments, the words he spoke on his deathbed echoed his life's commitment: "When I am gone, say nothing about Carey. Speak instead of Carey's Savior."

Four busloads of Southern Baptist short-term volunteers spent Nov. 12, the eve of the anniversary celebration, visiting Serampore College, which he founded in 1818 to train young Indians in both theology and the arts and sciences. They also visited Carey's first residence, now a mission church, and his final resting place, a humble tomb in a corner of Serampore's unkempt cemetery.

While remembering Carey

may have brought a rebuke from the "Friend of India," it was an experience the volunteers will not soon forget.

"It made me see what one man can do if he's right where God wants him to be," said Jim Thigpen of Austin, Texas.

"Visiting those places was like walking through history," said Ken Blackwood, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Marvell, Ark.

For Laura Moore of Meridian, the opportunity to walk where Carey walked was a dream come true. "I've wanted to come to India since I was 16. The Lord finally gave me the chance and I can't thank him enough for it. It's just been tremendous."

Like many of the volunteers,

*"When I am gone,
say nothing about
Carey. Speak instead
of Carey's Savior."
— William Carey*

Carolyn Shack of Hollister, Calif., studied William Carey's life while a seminary student. "I never thought I'd get to see this place or get to see where he is buried. I was very touched and blessed by the whole scene."

In January 1803, Carey started a church in a rented house in Calcutta with just a few friends. By April the meetings had grown to include 200. Three years later, a plot of land was purchased and, on Jan. 1, 1809, the Lal Bazar Baptist Chapel held the first services in its new building.

Now known as the Carey Baptist Church, it was the sight where Adoniram Judson, the first American Baptist Missionary Union missionary, was baptized in 1812.

Betty Sue Drury, retired schoolteacher from Fort Worth, Texas, felt a special connection to the church when she saw a marble plaque on the wall honoring the memory of Judson and his wife, Anne.

"When I saw that plaque, I just began to weep," said Drury, who formerly taught missions in a GA

group which included Rebekah Naylor, Southern Baptist missionary physician in India.

"The first book my mother ever gave me was *Through the Gates of Splendor*, the story of Anne Judson. Who would have ever thought that the little girl who got that book would one day stand here, where Adoniram and Anne stood? It was such a moving thing for me."

But far from simply taking a pilgrimage honoring a historical figure's memory, the volunteers ventured to India to honor Carey through a partnership evangelism project beginning Nov. 3. They made up more than 70 teams, working with national pastors and lay leaders to bring the message of Carey's Savior to the predominantly Hindu nation of nearly 900 million people.

In a week of witnessing through home-to-home visitation and nightly church meetings, more than 45,000 people heard the gospel presentation and at least 4,000 professions of faith were recorded.

"There wasn't a home we visited where people didn't accept the Lord," said Elvin Norris of Stafford, Ariz. "As we would finish in one place and start toward the car to leave, others would call us over to their homes to share with them."

The partnership gave the volunteers a taste of the hunger for the gospel in India that moved Carey to leave England for Calcutta 200 years earlier.

"My heart goes out to those people," said 82-year-old Monty Richards of McAllen, Texas. "When we were visiting and walking down those little narrow alleyways, groups of children would follow us. I felt like the Pied Piper. Just think what you could do if you had Vacation Bible Schools and could get those young ones in a nursery, growing up learning about Jesus. That's what discipleship is all about, but how are we going to do it?"

In the Carey Bicentennial Celebrations in Calcutta Nov. 13, Nilson Fanini, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Niteroi, Brazil, echoed Richards' thoughts to the gathering of some 3,500 Baptists from all over the world.

"Who is going to take the place of William Carey? Why did he who had so little do so much, and we who have so much do so little?" Fanini asked.

As a stream of people came forward in response to Fanini's challenge to take up where Carey left off, words attributed to William Carey seemed to reverberate throughout the hearts of the people in attendance:

"If a poor cobbler like me can do great things for God, there is no reason why you cannot do (them) yourselves."

Smith is staff news writer at Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

Thursday, December 2, 1993

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5



Convention musicians

Musical talent from across the state was showcased Nov. 16-17 at the 158th session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention at First Church, Jackson. Among the groups performing at the meeting were the Mississippi Singing Churchmen (above), who toured Russia in the spring of this year, and the Men's Ensemble (below) of First Church, McComb. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

WMU furlough housing list to be available to all

By Susan Doyle

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Woman's Missionary Union has agreed to expand the distribution of a list of churches and individuals who will provide furlough housing to missionaries.

The list, which includes housing sponsored by 358 churches and individuals, currently is mailed toward the end of each year to all career and associate missionaries employed by the Foreign Mission Board, FMB trustees and staff, members of the national WMU executive board, and state staffs and housing sponsors. The list also is shared with missionaries sponsored directly by Southern Baptist churches upon request.

Recently, WMU has agreed to mail the list to missionaries employed by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and to CBF offices.

"WMU is a clearinghouse of furlough housing information," said June Whitlow, WMU associate executive director responsible for the missionary housing function.

McGregor expected to recover

Don McGregor, editor emeritus of the Mississippi Baptist Record, has shown only slight improvement following a stroke Nov. 13.

The attack affected his speech and paralyzed his right arm. Doctors do expect McGregor to fully recover.

McGregor was eating in a Jackson-area restaurant when he became ill. Emergency vehicles rushed him to Rankin County Medical Center in Brandon. He was later moved to St. Dominic Hospital in Jackson for further tests and speech therapy.

Shirley Moore, wife of Arkansas exec. director, dies

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP) — Shirley Moore, wife of the Arkansas State Convention's executive director, Don Moore, died Nov. 23 following an eight-month battle with cancer. She was 58.

In addition to her husband, Mrs. Moore is survived by her daughter, Cindy Spicer of Little

Rock; her son, Jeff of Searcy; and five grandchildren. A native of Malvern, Ark., she was the daughter of the late Ray Willie and Nora France Martin Terrell.

Memorials may be made to Ouachita Baptist University, Arkansas Baptist Assembly, or the Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries.



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ed.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

Are TV shows like "Beevis and Butthead" okay for my children to watch?

If you are asking the question, there must be some doubts. List your doubts and watch the TV show without your children. Seek answers to your doubts by reading movie and/or TV reviews. A publication called **Parents and Kids** regularly reviews children's shows. Talk to other parents.

Our children have a great network of knowing what is going on in their friends' homes. As parents, we need to do the same networking so that we are not taking our kid's word for it.

I would strongly suggest all of us sit down and watch what our children are watching. At the commercials, take a break and talk about the show — how does it encourage morals, values, Christianity, sin, distrust, fear, pain, and hurt? As we are involved in our children's lives, they see how valuable they are to us. Therefore, they will seek to please us and God rather than themselves or their friends. Then they have learned a valuable lesson in self-discipline and self-control.

How do I get my husband to lead our family in family devotions?

First of all, have you asked him to lead? Second, do you have a book or devotion guide? Have you determined when is the best time? How will you let the children help?

Having family devotions does not have to be a long ordeal or to last for a long time. I am a firm believer in "teaching them along the way." Use the events of the day, a TV program, a crisis, or a news story as an illustration of God at work. Use the time as an opportunity to pray for sick people, missionaries, and for one another. Pray for Dad's big sales meeting, Mom's new boss, brother's understanding of fractions, and sister's friend who just moved.

Most men do not lead because of lack of time and resources, and fear of not knowing. Perhaps they were not taught how to lead. The nice thing about family devotions is that if we don't know the answer, we can call those who might. By having family devotions, we send our children out as missionaries rather than mission fields.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name and address not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

GCCC BSU funds missions creatively —

Not another Banquet!

By Tim Nicholas

Here's a holiday banquet that if you don't show up, they won't miss you. But that's only because nobody else will be there.

It's really a missions fund raiser. The Gulf Coast Community College Baptist Student Union is sponsoring the "Not Another Banquet" banquet.

It will take place on the Gulf Coast, on Dec. 24 at 7 p.m., according to Tim Thomas, BSU director at GCCC. A banquet hall is being reserved, but should be inexpensive since no food will be consumed.

Tickets for this banquet are \$10 and will go for student summer missions.

"The basic idea is that amidst the frantic efforts of trying to do too much, sometimes we get worn out," said Thomas.

For a paltry \$10, you can evade another holiday obligation and enrich summer missions, which pays for college students from Mississippi to work 10 weeks in the summer in home and foreign missions.

Thomas was arranging for a well-known speaker and a musician to pay not to come entertain the guests.

Thomas said that among the guests who have paid for the privilege of not attending are convention board Executive Director Bill Causey, Governor Fordice; Landrum Leavell, president of New Orleans Seminary; Mayor Ken Combs of Gulfport, Mississippi Power Company CEO David Ratcliff; Senator Clyde Whitfield; State Rep. Diane Peranich; and Gulfport Councilman Kim Savant, who has served on the BSU's area council.

Additionally, a large number of accountants plus about 25 lawyers have ordered tickets, "including one who gave me \$100 and said 'I really don't want to come,'" said Thomas. Also, several physicians are particularly interested in not coming.

To participate, send \$10 to Gulf Coast Community College Baptist Student Union, Box 4772, Biloxi, MS 39535.

The students really are collecting money for tickets to this non-event, but if you show up, you'll eat alone — that is, if you bring your own food.

Nicholas is director of the MBCB's Office of Communication.

Your first holidays — after the funeral

By Joe Gross

The holidays are a special time of year because they are related both to our culture and our faith. But it is the people we love who cause the holidays to take on unique meanings. The permanent absence of those who have shared previous holidays may create in some persons a desire to skip November and December altogether.

How grieving families and individuals face the first holidays after a significant loss varies greatly. The same is true of birthdays, death anniversaries, and other significant days of the year. Some attempt to act as if nothing has changed. Others seek to ignore the holidays completely. An emotionally healthy and spiritually mature response is most likely somewhere between those two extreme approaches.

If you are among the bereaved, some careful reflections and deliberate planning before the holiday season can do much to lessen any sense of anxiety, fear, or dread you might be feeling. While you certainly have no power to change things back as they once were, you do have the ability to constructively cope with your new holiday situation. Consider the following suggestions and be creative in shaping things unique to your life and family.

1) Be aware that holidays and other special days, such as birthdays and anniversaries, will reawaken and intensify your grief-pain. Memories of previous holidays will cause you to hurt and to feel incomplete and sad. These are memories made from hearts of love; embrace your pain, permit yourself to cry and to find times to be alone. But also give thanks for

the time you had together. The hurt of grief is real, but the passage of time and the grace of God bring healing.

2) Develop a specific plan for how you will handle each holiday. Such a plan will often require some frank and open discussion with other family members. Many persons are hesitant to discuss a plan for fear of causing other family members to cry or be upset. Remaining open and honest with one's feelings is a key to coming to terms with the loss.

3) Seek to be conscious of your expectations and determine if they are realistic. Christmas is one of those wonderful days that is too often loaded with unreal expectations — even in times when a death has not occurred. You may tend to get caught up in a "Hollywood" or fairy-tale fantasy of how Christmas "should be" as opposed to how your family actually functions. The coming of Christmas Day does not necessarily mean that family members are going to be drawn together full of love and laughter.

4) Avoid being alone on the actual holiday if at all possible. When your grief is deep and very painful, the tendency to avoid others can be strong. Sitting alone during these days can make you more miserable. Hopefully there will be those who, like you, have previously confronted their first holidays and will reach out to you.

Take all offers even if you don't feel up to it. Staying around the house alone usually increases one's sense of isolation. This is a time to force yourself to get out and to be with others.

5) Resolve to be kind and gentle with yourself. Remember that you already have your emotional plate full during these holidays. The second-guessing that so frequently accompanies grief in the form of "if onlys" and the "what ifs" can cause you to begin to beat up on yourself or to question your sanity. These "ifs" and "onlys" can be compounded during the holidays.

6) Remember the faithfulness of God and the power of your faith. Let prayer be a ready resource to you in your difficult moments and days. In times of profound grief, many people report they "don't feel like praying." One suggestion is to simply seek to learn to pray what is known as The Serenity Prayer.

The first holidays after the funeral may or may not be especially difficult for you. In any case, this is a time when your trust in the power of the resurrection of Christ and the certainty of eternal life can be felt at new levels. May this be true for you this year.

Gross is director of pastoral care and counseling at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas. Used by permission of the Texas BAPTIST STANDARD.

"It is a continuing joy for us to receive The Baptist Record and keep up with happenings.... It is the best in giving missionary information, and we are appreciative."

— Wendall and Jane Parker
Missionaries to Guatemala

Indonesian church seeks pastor

The pastor search committee of Kebayoran Baptist Church in Jakarta, Indonesia, is in the process of obtaining information from qualified individuals to fill the position of pastor/elder for the church.

Kebayoran Baptist Church is an English-speaking congregation of people of all nationalities. Americans compose the majority of the congregation. The paid staff consists of an interim pastor and a bilingual Indonesian secretary. Church attendance averages 250-300, and has several ministries in place: music, full program of Sunday morning Bible classes, preschool children's church.

The church seeks a pastor with the following qualifications: ordained Southern Baptist minister and a minimum master's degree, among others.

For more information, write the church, c/o John Girgis Maxus, SES, P.O. Box 650202, Dallas, TX 75265-0202.

The Baptist Record

is mailed free to missionaries in these countries



Angola
Argentina
Australia
Austria
Bangladesh
Barbados
Bolivia
Brazil
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Canada
Chile
China
Colombia
Costa Rica

Denmark
Ecuador
England
Ethiopia
France
Germany
Ghana
Guatemala
Honduras
Hong Kong
Hungary
Indonesia
Israel
Italy
Ivory Coast

Japan
Jordan
Kenya
Korea
Liberia
Mexico
Mongolia
Nicaragua
Niger Republic
Nigeria
Norway
Paraguay
Peru
Philippines

Portugal
Puerto Rico
Russia
Singapore
South Africa
Switzerland
Taiwan
Thailand
The Gambia
Togo
Uruguay
Venezuela
Zambia
Zimbabwe

Thanks to your support of the
Cooperative Program

HOUSE TOPS

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light: and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops. Matthew 10:27 NAS

December 2, 1993

HouseTops is a supplement to the **Baptist Record** and is produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.



THE SIXTH GRADER IN TRANSITION

by Beth Taylor

Children's consultant, Baptist Sunday School Board

ISSUES A CHURCH NEEDS TO ADDRESS

Originally, middle schools were designed to provide a time for sixth graders through eighth graders to be protected from and to prepare for high school. Though grades six through eight may function similarly, usually each grade has different activities, interests, and content.

When sixth graders are included in the Youth Division, many churches plan social activities and some learning activities with the sixth through twelfth graders in one group. This calls for appropriate decisions about organization, curriculum materials, learning activities, and social events so sixth graders can know God and His plan for them. These decisions include:

- Are sixth graders classified youth or children in the church's organization?
- How can the church effectively meet the needs of sixth graders as they develop spiritually, mentally, physically, and socially?
- What materials can the church use to reach more sixth graders and to teach them about God's plan for salvation?
- How can the church nurture sixth-grade Christians in living the Christian life?

PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

1. No matter where sixth graders are located in a school system, they are learning content on the sixth-grade level.
2. Because sixth graders think mostly in concrete terms, they need materials and methods which do not require them to think in abstract terms.
3. Many sixth graders have the physical characteristics of teenagers without the emotional maturity or stability to function in a youth program for sixth through twelfth graders.

continued on inside of HOUSETOPS

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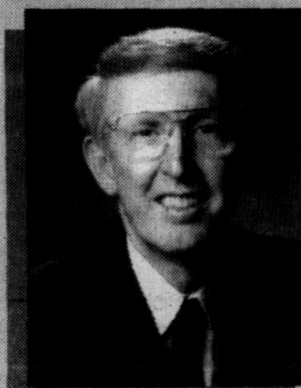
Mississippi Baptist EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

January 24-25, 1994

First Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss.



SAMMY TIPPIT
San Antonio, Tex.



NELSON PRICE
Marietta, Ga.



RON DUNN
Irving, Tex.



GREG BUCHANAN
Leawood, Kans.

MONDAY
Steve Bann
Ron Dunn
Ron Dunn
Jim Dunn
Jerry Dunn
Nelson Price
Sammy Tippit

TUESDAY
Steve Bann
Ron Dunn
Ron Dunn
Jim Dunn
Jerry Dunn
Nelson Price
Sammy Tippit

STORS

Encourage your lay people to attend this verita
spiritual feast.

"Ye Shall Be Witnesses Unto Me"
(Acts 1:8).....Jesus

pray this day....

Christmas time intensifies all our emotions, the good ones and the bad ones...let's pray these two weeks for ourselves as we deal with these emotions...let's pray for the folks we are with at work and home and play, knowing that their emotions are also intensified...let's pray that together we'll all make Christmas better for each other...



December 16-31, 1993

				Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				that your family will plan so that church celebrations of Christmas will be a priority of the holiday 16	for personal, individual faithfulness to responsibilities in Christmas programs, musicals, service projects 17	that Christian witness will not be compromised at Christmas parties 18
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday			
for each family member as Christmas wish lists get longer 19	for parental patience in guiding family members to understand budget limitations 20	that you'll read Luke's Christmas story more often than "Twas the Night Before Christmas" 21	for consideration of all families involved in planning holiday gatherings 22	for physical stamina to finish the shopping, cooking and cleaning, joyfully 23	for someone who is alone during the holiday time...make a brief visit 24	for the family who sits down to Christmas dinner for the first time without a loved one who died 25
for a special day of worship and praise 26	for youth all over the state who are at MC for the Youth Evangelism Conference 27	for courtesy at the after-Christmas sales 28	that you'll enjoy getting the tree down as much as you enjoyed getting it up 29	for folks who are now dreading the bills which will come in, for discipline to get them paid 30	that you'll start now to get ready for next Christmas so it won't be so hectic! (but, it probably will) 31	The Prayer Ministry office The Baptist Building P.O. Box 530 Jackson, MS 39205 PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

WHOM DO YOU SEE?

SEE YOUR YOUTH (10th-12th graders) singing solos, leading hymns, and playing their instruments for a panel of ministers of music; receiving their encouraging comments; and possibly being invited to participate in the State Youth Four Part Festival, February 26.



VOCAL FESTIVAL

Sing two selections

CONDUCTING FESTIVAL

Direct three hymns or conduct an anthem or instrumental ensemble (on the advanced level)

INSTRUMENTAL FESTIVAL

*(Woodwind, Brass, Strings, Pitched Percussion)
Play a solo piece of literature.*

SEE YOUR YOUTH Receiving Scholarships

Partial scholarships to Gulfshore, Ridgecrest or Glorieta Music Conferences
\$200.00 college music scholarships (Doubled when used at a Mississippi Baptist college)

AREA CONDUCTING, INSTRUMENTAL, VOCAL FESTIVALS Briarwood Drive Baptist Church, Jackson, January 17, 6:00 p.m.; North Oxford Baptist Church, January 17, 6:00 p.m.; First Baptist Church, Hattiesburg, January 18, 6:00 p.m. Registration Deadline January 10, 1994

For further information and registration forms, refer to your 1994 Youth Music Ministry Book, or contact your Church Music Department at 968-3800.

SEE YOUR YOUTH singing, leading hymns and playing instruments in their own home churches!

All-State Youth Choir

Auditions for the Mississippi Baptist All-State Youth Choir will take place Feb. 5-21 in a number of locations.

These auditions qualify youths in grades 9-12 for a statewide rehearsal camp and tour July 25-Aug. 1. They will be led by Richard Joiner, chairman of the music department at Mississippi College.

Auditions, all from 5 to 8 p.m., will be Feb. 5 at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board building, Jackson; Feb. 7 at Harrisburg Church, Tupelo; Feb. 8 at North Oxford Church, Oxford; Feb. 15 at Midway Church, Meridian; Feb. 17 at First Church Biloxi; Feb. 18 at Easthaven Church, Brookhaven; Feb. 19 at University Church, Hattiesburg (9 a. m. to 2 p.m.); and Feb. 21 at First Church, Greenwood.

Auditions will include a solo (no tapes), sight reading, tonal memory, and singing voice part from a hymn. Registration forms are available from the Church Music Department.

Audition fee is \$3 per person. Deadline for registration with the Church Music Department is one week prior to audition date.

Approximate cost of the choir tour is \$250 per member. Churches and associations are urged to establish scholarships to aid their selected youths. □

HOUSE OF

Sixth Grader...Continued from cover

4. Most sixth graders are not socially ready to interact with seventh through twelfth graders. When this occurs, eleventh and twelfth graders may drop out rather than cope with the immaturity of sixth graders.

5. Since sixth graders are social beings, they need more social activities appropriate for their age. Often they are more secure and better satisfied in a smaller group without the constant pressures of the more advanced activities with older youth.

6. The insecurity of sixth graders who are grouped with seventh through twelfth graders often causes them to drop out before they can develop the social or educational skills to participate in that grouping.

7. "Too much too soon" for a sixth grader and even for younger youth results in boredom or 'burnout' by the time they reach eleventh- and twelfth-grade levels.

8. School systems may make grouping and grading decisions in relationship to their enrollment, space, and budget. These decisions do not always apply to your church. Thus, each church must make decisions that meet the needs of their sixth graders.

9. Consider the basic needs of the sixth graders in your church. Enlist workers who are willing to spend extracurricular time with them in appropriate activities for their assigned age division. Sixth grade workers should be some of the best workers in your church.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Plan to involve both children's and youth coordinators, staff, and/or volunteer workers in making decisions about organizational patterns, curriculum materials, learning activities, and social events for sixth graders.

2. Whether sixth graders are in the Children's or Youth Division, use the suggestions found in the children's curriculum materials specifically for sixth graders. For Sunday lesson plans see Bible Searchers (Life and Work Foundation) (16 pages per teacher's quarterly especially for 6th graders) or Children's Bible Study (Convention Uniform Series).

3. Organize in small groups so that the sixth graders' need can be met whichever age division they are in.

4. Keep sixth graders in the Children's Division if at all possible, but upgrade their social activities. This will require effective parent/worker communication.

5. Plan to help the church staff, parents, and sixth graders understand what they have to look forward to.

6. Develop and maintain a strong relationship with parents prior to their children becoming sixth graders.

7. Make sixth graders feel special by giving them a unique name; such as "Super Sixes," "Tweens," or "Preppers." Provide a department or classroom away from or at the ends of the children's area. ☐

God is not **SILENT** *... are you listening?*

Youth Evangelism Conference

December 27-28, 1993

Mississippi College
Coliseum

Registration begins 12:30 p.m. Monday

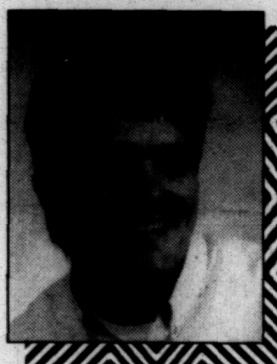
Conference begins 2:00 p.m. Monday

Concludes 3:40 p.m. Tuesday



Ken Smith

*Point of
Grace*



*Neil
McClendon*



Anna Hutto



Mag & Wag

REGISTRATION FEE: \$5.00 PER PERSON

Register by December 15, 1993,

for a complimentary breakfast provided by Mississippi College

Contact the Evangelism Department at 968-3800 for further details.

DiscipleYouth Leadership Conference

First Baptist Church,
Starkville

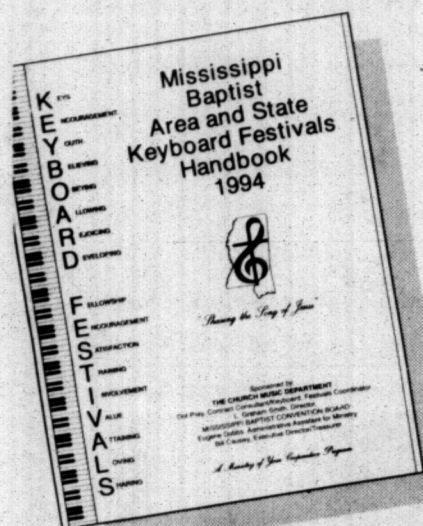
January 21-22, 1994

CONFERENCE LEADER:

Todd Nelson

DiscipleYouth Conference is to be at First Baptist Church, Starkville, January 21-22, 1994. DiscipleYouth is a concentrated, indepth experience to help youth develop the personal disciplines of discipleship and evangelism. Both DiscipleYouth I & II will be covered. The Conference begins Friday at 7:00 p.m. and ends Saturday at 5:00 p.m. The cost of the conference which includes all conference materials (including the DiscipleYouth Library) and breaks are \$45.00 (or \$20 for a spouse sharing your material). If you bring your own DiscipleYouth Library, the Conference fee is \$20.00. For reservations please call Wes Pegues, Discipleship and Family Ministry Department, 968-3800. ☐

1994 Area & State Keyboard Festivals



NOTE:
REGISTRATION DUE
MONDAY, DECEMBER 20,
1993

AREA	LOCATION	FESTIVAL LEADER	PHONE
Thursday, January 27, 1994, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.			
Area 2	Harrisburg Baptist Church, 1800 West Main St., Tupelo	Darwin Brooks	C 842-6917
Area 4	Fairview Baptist Church, 201 Airline Road, Columbus	Diane Smith	C 842-6917
Area 5	Alta Woods Baptist Church, 168 Colonial Dr., Jackson	Slater Murphy	C 328-2924
Area 7	First Baptist Church, 1700 Delaware Ave., McComb	Bob Jones	C 372-8651
Area 8	First Baptist Church, 510 West Pine St., Hattiesburg	Mark Moore	C 684-2971
Area 8	First Baptist Church, 605 Fifth St. Laurel	Carol Watts	C 684-2971
		Kathy Vail	C 264-7443
		Rick Carter	C 544-0100
		Earline Carter	C 649-5711
		Richard Green	C 649-5711
Friday, January 28, 1994, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.			
Area 9	First Baptist Church, 40 53rd St., Gulfport	Tammy Turnage	H 864-8707
Saturday, January 29, 1994, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.			
Area 1	Colonial Hills Baptist Church, 2101 Colonial Hills Dr., Southaven	Elizabeth Cothorn	H 781-2582
Area 3	First Baptist Church, 407 Main St., Greenville	John Burke	C 334-9452
Area 5	Morrison Heights Baptist Church, 201 Morrison Dr., Clinton	Alice Kathryn Turner	H 332-8959
Area 5	First Baptist Church, 1607 Cherry St., Vicksburg	Carol Durham	H 924-0469
Area 6	Poplar Springs Drive Baptist Church, 4032 Poplar Springs Dr., Meridian	Gary Miller	C 924-5620
		Jim Hess	C 636-2493
		Harry Tillery	C 425-5106

Students in grades one through twelve may participate. Each participant, with the assistance of their teacher, church music staff or festival leader, will select category for participation.

Mississippi Baptist Area and State Keyboard Festivals Handbook 1994 has been mailed to the Baptist church organists, church pianists, piano and organ teachers in Mississippi.

Questions concerning the keyboard festivals may be answered by contacting the Festival Leader in your area or Dot Pray, Keyboard Contract Consultant, Festivals Coordinator, Church Music Department, P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205, telephone 968-3800.



Christian Performing Arts Festival Crossgates Baptist Church - Brandon, Mississippi

Festival:
\$17.00

REGISTRATION FORM
Christian Performing Arts Festival
February 25-26, 1994

Pizza & Performance:
\$6.00

Name _____ Home/Work Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Church: _____ Association _____

of Adults attending festival _____ + # of Youth attending festival _____ = Total _____

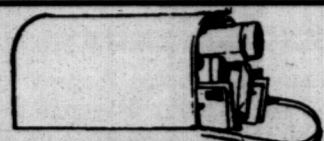
of Adults attending banquet _____ + # of Youth attending banquet _____ = Total _____

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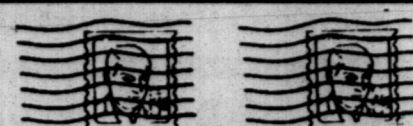
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Letters to the editor



Other side of the coin

Editor:

While at a friend's house recently, I happened to read [Mark] Wingfield's article (Baptist Record, Nov. 11, 1993) on the Mormons in Utah and, after much prayer and consideration, decided to respond. The decision didn't come easily.

As a native Mississippian and

Latter-day Saint (Mormon), I have many friends and family members who are Southern Baptists, all good, intelligent people. They are not stupid. They know me and my husband to be devout Christians, humble and generous, who would never persecute anyone. They are apparently not like Mr. Wingfield and his following.

I don't know what it's like to be a Baptist living in Utah, but I can tell you what it's like to be a

Mormon in Mississippi. We are a people who have suffered threats and beatings; we've been chased out of our homes and neighborhoods and, in years past, some of us have awakened to find burning crosses in our front yards. We have been jailed and assaulted, tarred and feathered, and we have watched churches burn to the ground more than once. All this in the last 100 years. We have endured our children being pub-

licly ridiculed, some of them beaten up at school and called "devil worshippers." We have been disowned by friends and family and harassed. I could go on and on.

Whenever The Baptist Record prints articles like the one of Nov. 11, it makes you look very, very ignorant. If my own experience is any indicator, and I think it is, your enmity is driving good Christian people out of your denomination. Of recent you have printed distorted articles about Mormons, Masons, Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Muslims, "liberals," even Jews, all "persecuting" you. Is there anyone you get along with?

You mentioned the Southern Baptist Convention in 1998 in Salt Lake City. If fundamentalists continue to dominate your leadership I would be surprised if there were a Southern Baptist Convention at all in five years.

Christ said, "Ye shall know them by the fruits they bear." When my friend's daughter recently came home with a cross drawn on her back, crying hysterically from humiliation, my friend asked me, "Where in heaven's name do these children learn such cruelty?" I handed her Mr. Wingfield's article.

Karen Wright
Jackson

Objects Scout ruling

Editor:

Regarding the article "Is 'Serve God' optional for Girl Scouts" (Nov. 18): Years ago as one of the Girl Scout leaders I took pride in teaching the girls the promise because we were teaching them to serve God. In my

opinion, any other way is letting God and the girls down. May the Girl Scouts, their parents, friends, and pastors object to this new ruling.

Bobbie G. Wallace
Crystal Springs

A personal apology

Editor:

I am concerned about the issue of prayer being allowed in the Wingfield High School at Jackson. I voted at the Mississippi Baptist Convention for the resolution that praised the students and the principal at Wingfield High School. But since the convention I have come to understand more of what took place. I understand that the principal allowed 400 students to have public prayer in the school. This sounds good, but I found out that the prayer had to be non-denominational and could not mention Jesus Christ's name in the prayer. I have been taught in church and by my pastors that prayer was not real prayer if Jesus Christ was left out. So after meditating on this subject, I feel that this type of prayer brings dishonor to my Lord Jesus Christ. Praying to God without Jesus Christ involved is agreeing with other religions such as Islam, Muslim, Jehovah Witness, Judaism, and others. These religions see Jesus Christ as something other than the God Man, the Son of God, the Messiah, and the Saviour. I think Satan himself may be pleased with this type of praying.

I don't support anything that is willing to leave Jesus Christ out so as to get something accomplished.

I think this incident may be teaching the students that it is all right to leave Jesus Christ out of their lives to get what they want. It also may be teaching the students to find loopholes in the government system so as to beat the government to get what they want. It also may be teaching the students to act like the common criminal in beating the government. The deceit, cunning, and the collaborations that took place for the students to pray a prayer like this is not a good example for today's students. It also may be opening the doors for the other religions mentioned above to be accepted.

If this type of prayer is acceptable for the students to use, it should be accepted in our churches also. Since so many people are backing the students in this type of praying, could it be evidence that it has already been accepted in our church?

Before you ask, no, I don't have an answer to the problems. But I don't believe using God and leaving out Jesus Christ our Lord is the answer to the problem. May we not be labeled as conforming to the world's thinking concerning God and Jesus Christ.

J.C. Hall
Grenada

HEALTHCARE

FOR THE RECORD

MBMC Helps Form Innovative Physician-Hospital Organization

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Mississippi Health Partners has been formed to provide quality services in the most cost efficient manner. Mississippi Health Partners will work with area physicians and the three hospitals to meet the demands of today's health care environment, while serving patients and their employers.

This not-for-profit PHO will offer a Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) managed care product to Central Mississippi, bringing improved efficiencies and providing cost savings to area employers. PPOs offer a choice of physicians, hospitals and other health care providers who contract to serve employees and their families covered by a particular health plan.

Mississippi Health Partners features experienced physicians and specialists, who draw upon the extensive resources and services of the Jackson area's leading community-based, not-for-profit medical institutions.

Stewardship & Collaboration

MBMC's participation is rooted in the hospital's Christian mission — working to serve the changing health care needs of the community while serving as a good steward of resources.

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Names in the News



Heith Wilkinson was ordained to the gospel ministry at Whitesand Church, Prentiss. Participating in the ordination service, pictured, from left, are Steven Wilkinson, brother; Heith Wilkinson; Ron Wilkinson, uncle; and Charles Wesley, pastor of Whitesand Church. Wilkinson is minister of music and activities at Whitesand Church.

Dr. and Mrs. Russell Bush II observed their 50th wedding anniversary on Sunday, Nov. 28. He is pastor of Main Street Church, Hattiesburg. His son, Russell Bush III, vice president and academic dean of the faculty at Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., preached on Sunday morning at Main Street Church in honor of the occasion.

Roxie Church, Franklin Association, recently

honored three deacons for 40 consecutive years service as deacons. The honorees, L.B. Farr Jr., Clifford Whitehead, and A.D. Whitehead were presented plaques during a special service. The service was followed by a reception hosted by all deacons of the church. The men were ordained on Nov. 7, 1953 while W.A. Green was pastor.

Locust Street Church, McComb, ordained Danny Creel, minister of music, to the gospel ministry on Aug. 22. The charge to the candidate was brought by J. Frank Smith, pastor of Locust Street Church. A Bible was presented to Creel by D.L. Callendar. Creel is married to the former Lisa Blalock and is a graduate of Southwest Mississippi Community College and University of Southern Mississippi.

Creel

Isaac (Ike) Shea Sanford was ordained as a deacon of Union South Church, Covington County, Oct. 31. Ken Stringer gave the charge to Sanford. Joe Ratcliff and Lamar Williams gave the charge to the church.

Conehatta Church, Conehatta, licensed three men to preach. They are Mark A. Engram Sr., Kenneth C. Leach Jr., and Donald Taylor. Also, Rodney Meador recently surrendered to preach. Mark Ingram is interim pastor.

Brotherhood names Norton marketing head

MEMPHIS (BP) — The Brotherhood Commission has announced the hiring of Tim Norton, 32, to head the marketing efforts of the 86-year-old Southern Baptist agency. He will begin his new assignment Dec. 1.

Norton comes to the Brotherhood Commission from the Home Mission Board, where he had been as associate director of church growth and associational evangelism since 1992. He was the HMB's associate director of marketing from 1990-92.

Michigan seeks exec. director

The announced retirement of the executive director of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan has necessitated a search for a man to fill that position.

Any suggestions or recommendations should be made in writing, signed by the respondent, to: Damon Patterson, Search committee chairman, 77 Wadsworth St., Monroe, MI 48161.



Jeffrey D. Waldo, (right) was ordained Sept. 26 to the ministry by Carey Springs Church, Randolph. Waldo is now pastor of Valley Grove Church, Pontotoc Association. Pictured with Waldo is Chuck Shumaker, pastor of Carey Springs Church.

Convention related meetings

The Mississippi College Christian Service Alumni breakfast was held in Jackson Nov. 16. Approximately 100 members were present to hear Rory Lee, MC's acting president, speak and to elect officers. They are: Jim Little, president; and Bill Hurt, vice president.

The group also established a scholarship in memory of Bernard Blackwell, who had served as alumni secretary.

The Southern Baptist Center Mississippi Alumni held its annual luncheon Nov. 16 in Jackson. Their new officers are: Marc D. Howard, Corinth, president; Tommy Inmon, Pontotoc, vice president; Mamon Morris, Randolph, secretary/treasurer; and John Stewart, Oxford, public relations officer.

For more information, contact Marc Howard at Holly Church, Corinth, (601) 286-3474.



Charles Gentry, right, pastor of Wynndale Church, Terry, is the recipient of the "Alumnus of the Year" award from the Mississippi Southwestern Seminary alumni chapter. Gentry was honored at the seminary's annual luncheon during the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Pictured making the presentation is Kiely Young, chapter president and pastor of First Church, Gulfport.

Staff Changes

Yale Street Church, Cleveland, called Jimmy Sellers as pastor effective Oct. 17. His previous place of service was Parkhill Church, Jackson.

Harold G. Wilson resigned as pastor of Old Hebron Church, Jefferson Davis Association, Nov. 1. Wilson, available for supply and interim, can be contacted at P.O. Box 302, Prentiss, MS 39474 or call 792-8202.

Pelahatchie Church, Rankin County, has called Michael W.



Glenn

Glenn as pastor effective Nov. 7. A native of Alabama, he is a graduate of the University of Montevallo, Ala. and is continuing his education at New Orleans Seminary.

Calvary Church, Pascagoula,

has called John Robert "Robby" Burt as pastor effective Dec. 1. A native of Evergreen, he received his education at Mississippi State University, Southwestern Seminary, and a Pastoral Education Certification at Baylor University Medical Center. His previous place of service was First Church, Marietta, Okla.

Weyland Gauntt moved from Cloverdale Church, Adams Association, to Franklin Church, Hinds-Madison Association, effective Nov. 14.

Charles Gary Pittman Jr. moved to Ingle-side Church, Shreveport, La., as minister of music and education, effective Sept. 15. His previous place of service was First Church, Terry.



Pittman

Missionary News

Elton and Dottie Gray, missionaries to Japan, are in the States (address: 717 N. Hughes, Little Rock, Ark. 72205). He is a native of Tennessee, and she is the former Dottie Eavenson of Marks.

Frederick and Carolyn Massingill, missionaries to Senegal, have completed language study in France and arrived on their field of service (address: Mission Baptiste SBC, BP 8417 -

Yoff, Dakar, Senegal). He was born in Alabama. The former Carolyn Smith was born in Laurel.

Paula Smith, missionary to Uruguay, is on the field (address: Casilla 14052, Montevideo, Uruguay). She was born in Greenwood and considers North Carrollton her hometown.

The Thought Occurred to Me; A Book about Owen Cooper

by Don McGregor, editor emeritus, Baptist Record
Foreword by Jerry Clower
Details how Cooper worked with Jerry Rankin, Foreign Mission Board president, to evangelize India. \$9.95 including postage.
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Just for the Record

Thursday, December 2, 1993

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9

Home missionary Paul Roaten offers comfort, Christ to migrants

By David Winfrey

HOPE, Ark. (BP) — On a stretch of U.S. 67 in southwest Arkansas, home missionary Paul Roaten, a native of Tupelo, looks out a window from the white-box building that houses the Southern Baptist migrant missions center.

Across the road this morning, kids play outside the government-owned rest stop for farm laborers. There migrants celebrate the halfway point of their two-day journeys to and from farms by catching a few hours' sleep or washing a load of laundry.

On Roaten's side of the road, the missions center offers comfort, clothing, and Christ through refreshments, hygiene bags, and nightly worship services.

"Our approach here is to present Christian love and see their response to it," said Roaten, 56, a former foreign missionary to Uruguay.

About 2,700 families visited the center last year. Parents can sip coffee while talking to Roaten and others or make selections from the free clothing closet.

Children can burn restless energy through sports or games, much to the relief of road-weary parents who still have long drives ahead.

This year, 340 volunteers from 41 churches in five states worked at the center, which had more than 100 professions of faith.

"As the opportunity opens, then we share the gospel with them," said Roaten, who came to the center in October 1991.

Built in 1972, the Baptist center gets more than 7,700 visits annually, Roaten explained. The government's "farm labor center" across the street has 230 beds. It stays open around the clock from March 1 through Dec. 31 and receives more than 25,000 visits annually.

Migrants pay \$3 for 12 hours' use of a room with 2 sets of bunk beds, he said. "There will be nights in June they'll have 650

people registered."

The mission center distributes Bibles and other religious materials in addition to hygiene items and clothing. This year, the American Bible Society donated 1,500 English and Spanish Bibles.

"We try to make sure every family either has a Bible or gets one before they leave here," he said. "We have given out close to

Mission Board actually goes back to 1963," he said, referring to a five-month temporary appointment when he worked with the men's rescue mission in New Orleans before attending seminary.

Aside from living in a different culture, Roaten said it is difficult to find distinctions between home and foreign missions. "Some of the same things we learned or experienced in years of work there in Uruguay we've recognized here."

For example, a swing set in the backyard was hardly used before he had it moved to the front of the property. The reason, he said, was Hispanics are so respectful of personal property that most weren't comfortable being in the center's backyard.

In 1991, the center was highlighted during the Woman's Missionary Union's Christmas in August program. That was a "tremendous help," Roaten said, recalling moving into the apartment behind the center before his wife moved to Hope.

Boxes of toiletries and other items that had been mailed from across the country for the migrants filled the rooms, he said. "I had to move boxes for two hours before I could get anything out of my car."

Winfrey is associate director, News and Information, HMB.

"Our approach here is to present Christian love and see their response to it."
— Mississippi native Paul Roaten

4,700 Bibles and New Testaments as they came through this year."

Roaten was an appointed foreign missionary for 20 years when in 1989 his son, David, was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis.

Roaten and his wife, Betty, returned to the United States, where he worked with a church in Texas for nine months and was pastor at Ethel Baptist Church in Mississippi before he learned about the need for a director in Hope.

"My experience with the Home



Marshall Association will present an association-wide Christmas musical on Dec. 5 in the activities building of First Church, Holly Springs, at 6:30 p.m. Pictured is part of the 100-member choir and Ron Bolen, minister of music at Slayden Church, conducting.

Enrollment figures at Southeastern Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., have reached the highest level in five years, according to the seminary's registrar. New student enrollment nearly doubled from last year and is at the highest level since 1985. There are 254 new students enrolled at Southeastern this fall, bringing the total enrollment to 688, compared to 628 the previous fall.

The public is invited to attend and participate in the singing of Handel's "Messiah" at 7:30 p.m., Dec. 6, in the chapel on the campus of New Orleans Seminary. For more information, call (504) 282-4455, ext. 3226.

Mississippi Baptist Medical Center will present a holiday cooking demonstration, "Creative Treats: The Healthy Way," Dec. 9 at 6 p.m. Cost is \$15 per person, \$20 per couple. For more information, call (601) 968-1039.

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Christmas House '93
Dec. 9 & 10, 7-10 p.m.
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Home missionary Paul Roaten welcomes a family of farm laborers visiting the Southern Baptist migrant missions center in Hope, Ark. The center is across the road from a government rest stop for migrants traveling between homes in southern Texas and farms farther north. On Roaten's side of the road, the missions center offers refreshments, hygiene bags, free Bibles, and nightly worship services. Last year, about 27,000 families visited the center, which averages about 100 professions of faith annually. (BP photo by David Winfrey)

Uniform

The good news is ours



By Michael O'Brien
Luke 1, 3

We have all heard and perhaps even said, "I have good news and I have bad news." The glorious part of the gospel is the fact that God says to us, "I have good news and I have good news." God's Word to us is all good news when we accept it in faith and believe. Allow your heart to be open during this season of advent and repent of any and all sin, and believe.

The childlessness of the couple (1:5-7). When we study the story of the childlessness of Zechariah and Elizabeth our heart strings are tugged. We feel pity that they have lived so long without a child. Let me point out that God never intended for them to have a child, because God had a very special plan for them later on. The folks that we need to feel sorry for are the ones who are not in the will of God for their lives.

The chastisement of the angel (1:8-22). "How can I be sure of this?" That is the question that Zechariah asked Gabriel. Why did Gabriel strike Zechariah dumb in the temple? First, he was in the temple. God had gotten him there by causing the lot (they cast lots) to fall on him. God's messenger met him at the altar and explained that his prayers were being answered. Gabriel had put him at ease with the statement, "Do not be afraid." When we are in the presence of one who stands before God, our answers should be, "Yes, Lord."

Elizabeth's conception (1:23-25). Now listen to Elizabeth: "The Lord has done this for me." She realized what was happening in her life was supernatural. God was at work — he was up to something. What God was up to was preparing the way for his Son. Elizabeth recognized that God was blessing her. We should always realize that when the good and the perfect things are going on in our lives, God is up to something.

John's call (3:1-6). "...The Word of God came to John... in the desert" (v. 2b). John's reaction to the call of God ought to stand as one of the premier examples to all of us. "He went into all the country around Jordan, preaching..." John knew what God had called him to do and so do the rest of us. The difference is that John got after it. Most of us want to sit around and debate with God as to whether this is a good time. When God calls us to a task, it's a good time. It's an excellent time. It's the right time and the only time.

John's condemnation (3:7-9). What should John's reaction have been to the people coming out to hear him? Should he have "tickled their ears?" John loved these people and he knew exactly what they needed to hear. Yes, his message was tough. Yes, he was straight forward and to the point. We need more honest, straight forward preaching today if we intend to interrupt some folks' journey into sinners' hell. In verse 9, John's words are the equivalent of "shape up or ship out." God is already poised to bring down the axe.

John's correction (3:10-14, NIV). First, the crowd asks, and then the tax collectors ask, and finally some soldiers ask, "What should we do?" (vv. 10, 12, 14). What John answered was simply, "Correct your ways." We could say that John implied the "golden rule of Christ — do unto others..." God's ways are not hard, they are right. God's people are admonished to act right.

John's conclusion (3:15-18). As all the people stand about to hear what else John might say, some wonder if he is the Christ. He is not and does not try to be what he is not. He does exactly what God intended for him — and us — to do. He points them to Christ. For John, he points to One who is coming. For us, we point to the One who has come. "And with many other words John exhorted the people and preached the good news to them" (3:18, NIV). People are still waiting for us to "preach the good news."

O'Brien is pastor, First Church, Lexington.

Bible Book

God seeks covenant renewal



By Jewel P. Merritt
Deuteronomy 29, 30

Reading the title of this lesson reminded me again that God always makes the first move toward mankind. In the Garden of Eden God came into the garden calling, "Where are you?" He has continued calling through the prophets, John the Baptist, the apostles, Paul, and especially through his Holy Spirit and Jesus. "For the Son of Man came to SEEK and to save what was lost" (Luke 19:10, NIV).

The need for renewal of the covenant (29:10-13). Each of us is responsible to God. After our salvation experience, we need to renew our dedication to the Lord. David spoke of his need for renewal in Psalm 51:10: "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and RENEW a steadfast spirit within me" (NIV). Isaiah said, "Those who hope in the Lord will RENEW their strength" (Isa. 40:31a, NIV). Paul wrote often about our need for renewal. One example is Romans 12:2b: "Be transformed by the RENEWING of your mind."

Moses spoke to the Israelites of their need for renewal in this his third and last address. He noted that standing before the Lord that day were the captains of the tribes, the elders and officers, the men of Israel along with their wives and children, and the aliens who were in their camp. In short, everyone was there. Each person needed to be a part of the renewing of the covenant. But God was the One who spoke through Moses calling his people into a time of committing themselves to him again.

Prediction of eventual establishment of the covenant (30:1-3). After 40 years of living with the Israelites, Moses knew how prone they were to sin. It was not long after his death that his words rang true. "After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who neither knew the Lord nor what he had done for Israel. Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord and served the Baals" (Judges 2:10-11, NIV).

Just as Moses had known that the people would sin and bring God's judgment on themselves, so he also knew that God forgives when people repent. In verse 1 Moses said, "Thou shalt call them to mind." In other words, when they came to their senses, they would return to the Lord.

Jesus used this idea in his story of the prodigal son. "When he came to his senses" (Luke 15:17a, NIV). Turning from our sins and renewing our commitment to the Lord brings forgiveness from him. God's love is steadfast. He is compassionate. For a reminder of God's love for repentant sinners, consider this picture from the parable of the prodigal son. "While he (the prodigal) was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him" (Luke 15:20, NIV). As we read these three verses in Deuteronomy, we see the same compassionate Lord waiting for his children to come to their senses, repent, and obey.

The possibility of obedience (30:11-12, 14). Moses told the people that God's laws were not too difficult to understand (v. 11). Isaiah wrote, "I am the Lord and there is no other. I have not spoken in secret, from somewhere in a land of darkness" (Isa. 45:18b-19a, NIV). Hundreds of years later James wrote, "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him" (James 1:5, NIV).

This does not mean that a quick scanning of the Bible will reveal all its treasures. One of the wonderful things about the Bible is the new joys that come with a continuing study of God's Word. As Moses said, the word is near us even in our hearts so that we may obey it (v. 14).

The choices God offers (30:15-16). The choice set before Israel was clear — life and prosperity or death and destruction. The choice and the resulting consequences were theirs. God longed to forgive and bless.

Our choices and the consequences remain the same as God offered the Israelites. Let's begin this Christmas season with a time of renewal and a pledge to love and obey the Lord.

Merritt is a member of First Church, Jackson.

Life and Work

Devotion to God



By Mark A. Rathel
Luke 1

This week we begin a four-unit study of the Lukan narratives concerning the birth of John and Jesus. The Gentile physician Luke wrote a masterful two-volume treatise to an unknown Theophilus detailing the history of the Christian movement. Luke solidly anchored the Christian gospel in the Jewish faith and traced the expansion of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome. As the Christian movement spread geographically, the movement was transformed from a Jewish constituency to an inclusive, universal fellowship.

Luke began his gospel with the preparation of John the Forerunner.

God recognized humble believers (vv. 5-7). John's parents belonged to a small, believing remnant of Jews. The law required a priest to marry a virgin of Israel, but the law did not require a priest to marry the daughter of a priest. Zechariah's fellow-priests enviously considered Zechariah a double-blessed man for marrying a daughter of a priest.

The couple's childlessness was not the result of sin, as supposed by spiritually-arrogant parents. Zechariah and Elizabeth faithfully obeyed the commands of God. The terms "righteous" and "blameless" express the couple's realization of God's intention.

God spoke to Zechariah in worship (vv. 8-9). Every male descendant of Aaron served as a priest. The great number of priests, probably 18,000-20,000 during the ministry of Christ, required a division of labor. Priests served the temple two weeks a year. The priests cast lots to determine which priests would be privileged to offer the burnt offering, meal offering, incense offering, and maintain the golden candlestick. Some priests never had the privilege of making the offerings. Zechariah was chosen to offer incense directly in front of the Holy of Holies. The smoke arising from the incense altar symbolized the prayers of God's people rising up to God.

God answered Zechariah's prayer (vv. 11-13). After Zechariah offered the incense, he most likely lay prostrate in a posture of prayer. The angel Gabriel appeared to Zechariah and confirmed that God heard his prayer. The Bible does not state Zechariah's specific request, although the nature of the prayer was twofold. In his song recorded in Luke 1:68-79, Zechariah praised God for the coming redemption of his people and the role of his son John. God answered both prayers of Zechariah in such a way that the answers were intertwined. John's role was to prepare the way for the coming agent of redemption.

God called John to a special task (vv. 15-17). John possessed a twofold qualification for his role as forerunner of the Messiah. He expressed his commitment to the Lord by an ascetic lifestyle, particularly abstinence from alcoholic beverages. As well, God filled John with the Holy Spirit.

God placed upon John the task of preparing the people for the coming Lord. His methodology to accomplish this task was the calling of the people to repentance before God. Repentance results in transformed family life, the reconciliation of fathers and children, as well as for everyday living.

Repentance is a prerequisite among God's people for any great movement of God. Do you want to see God move with power in your life? Then turn your heart back to God. Repent of your sins by turning from them. Be reconcilable to others.

Rathel is pastor, Bay Vista Church, Biloxi.

THE VILLAGE VIEW



The Baptist Children's Village

Ronny E. Robinson, Executive Director
P.O. Box 27,
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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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Representing she and her husband, James, Mrs. Annie Lee Ham accepts their 10-year service pins. Mr. and Mrs. Ham serve as Child Care Workers in our Chemical Dependency Program.



Mrs. Eloise Avery is pictured receiving her Level 3 Child Care Worker Certificate from Director of Programs, Mr. Henry Glaze. Mrs. Avery who is from Webster County, has served as Child Care Worker in our Emergency Care Program for the past 5 years.

Mississippi's Largest Family
Wishes each of you a Happy
Holiday Season.





Pen Pal Club

Dear Pen Pal Club:

Hi! My name is Cristen Dickson. I am 11 and in the 6th grade. I am a Christian. I go to West Ellisville Baptist Church. My hobbies are collecting porcelain dolls, swimming, riding my bike, and reading. If you would like to be my pen pal, please write and send a picture to: Rt. 4, Box 273, Ellisville, MS 39437.

Cristen Dickson

Dear Pen Pal Club:

Hello. My name is D.J. Washington. I am in the fourth grade and 9 years old. My hobbies are watching TV, playing nintendo, going outside, and playing with my brother. I would like boys and girls of any ages to write me at: Rt. 2, Box 65-B, Houlka, MS 38850.

D.J. Washington

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is M.J. Gallop, and I am 10 years old. I hope I can get a pen pal. My family runs a dairy farm, and I like to play with cows a lot. I also have two horses and three dogs. I go to a Christian school in Amory. I really enjoy being a Christian. If you want to be my pen pal, send your letter to: 30003 Sargent Dr., Aberdeen, MS 39730.

Marvin Jason Gallop

Dear Pen Pal Club:

Hi! My name is Amy Smith. I have 11 pets: three dogs, five cats, two hamsters, and one parakeet. I have a brother named Kyle. I go to Oak Vale Baptist Church. I'm 11 years old and in the sixth grade. If you would like to be my pen pal, write to: P.O. Box 5, Oak Vale, MS 39656.

Amy Smith

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is Lesley Syfrett. I am 11 years old and in the sixth grade. I enjoy playing softball and riding horses. I have two sisters, a dog, and three cats. If you would like to be my pen pal, write to me at: Rt. 4, Box 317, Macon, MS 39341. Please send a picture.

Lesley Syfrett

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is Jenna Talbert. I'm nine years old. I have two brothers and a cat named Angel. I like to read mysteries. My favorites are Nancy Drew and the Box Car Children. I would like a boy or girl pen pal. Write to: Rt. 3, Box 323, Newton, MS 39345.

Jenna Talbert

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is Heather Hall, and I would really, really like to have a

pen pal. I would always try to write back. My hobbies are swimming, skating, painting, and playing with my pets, Putter, Hitler, and Bud. I am 11 years old and in the 6th grade at Wesson Attendance Center. I go to Zion Hill Baptist Church. Please write me at 1064 Springhill Road, Wesson, MS 39191.

Heather Nicole Hall

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is Rebecca Elaine Hudson. My hobbies are swimming, reading, and having sleepovers. I would like a boy or girl to write me at 8912 Hamauka St., Diamondhead, MS 39525.

Rebecca Elaine Hudson

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is Billy Hayman, and I am 10 years old and in the fifth grade. I love riding my four-wheeler and playing baseball and football. I go to Simpson Central Elementary. My favorite subject is math and science. I hope someone wants to write me: Rt. 3, Box 174-A, Mendenhall, MS 39114. Please send a photo.

Billy Hayman

Dear Pen Pal Club:

Hi! My name is Audrey Sturdivant. I am 10 years old. I have a sister named Kimberly. I have a rabbit, two kitty cats, four dogs, and a fish. I like riding horses, jumping on my trampoline, and reading. I attend Yellow Leaf Baptist Church, Oxford. There I am a GA. I like sports like girls softball, basketball, football, and tennis. If you would like to be my pen pal, please write to: Rt. 5, Box 107-D, Oxford, MS 38655. Please send a picture.

Audrey Sturdivant

Dear Pen Pal Club:

Hi! My name is LeAnn Wheelless. I am 11 years old and in the sixth grade at Oak Grove Middle School. I attend Immanuel Baptist Church. I have an older brother named Scott. I have a dog named Blackie. Please write to me and send your picture to P.O. Box 15332, Hattiesburg, MS 39402.

LeAnn Wheelless

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is Amanda Brunt. I am 6 years old, and I go to Oakland Baptist Kindergarten. My favorite colors are gold, silver, pink, and purple. I have a cat named Murdoch. I have a sister Megan. My best sports are swimming, gymnastics, and bike riding. I go to Tate Baptist Church. I hope someone will write me at: Rt. 7, Box 74-D, Corinth, MS 38834.

Amanda Brunt

CHILDREN'S PAGE

Children read and understand modern Bible translations best

FORT WORTH (BP) — Children do not understand the King James Version of the Bible as well as they understand modern translations, according to findings in research conducted by Southwestern Seminary doctoral student Gail Linam.

Linam, director of the associate degree program at Dallas Baptist University, studied biblical reading comprehension for her doctor of education dissertation at Southwestern. Her research revealed that the KJV frustrated some children to the point of tears during testing, she said.

"In reality, that beautiful language translated in 1611 represented a whole new language for the boys and girls, one that they didn't understand," she said. "I contend they need an opportunity to read and understand what the Scripture says."

Linam's dissertation may help give them that opportunity. A Baptist Sunday School Board cur-

riculum-redesign task force is currently studying Linam's findings as part of a decision to switch some KJV children's literature to modern translations.

Both church and unchurched youngsters grasped the modern translations best, Linam said. She conducted the tests twice — once with Sunday School members at First Church, Arlington, Texas, and once with unchurched children who attend Mission Arlington, a ministry of First, Arlington.

During testing, the children were divided into three groups and asked to read a Bible story using either the KJV, the New International Version, or the New Century Version. After, they were filmed retelling the story to a research assistant. One girl from the KJV group couldn't even begin to retell her story.

"I don't know," she said, staring into the camera. "I didn't understand. This is too much stress for me."

In addition to the retelling method, Linam also administered a Cloze test, which deletes every fifth word from a biblical text. Children fill in the word they think should go in the blank. Neither retelling nor Cloze showed a significant difference between children's understanding of the two modern versions.

Linam's dissertation is the first complete study on children's biblical reading comprehension to be published in the United States.

"We've all thought this version or that version was better," said Linam, who anticipates receiving her degree in December. "But it is fascinating to read the study and to see accurate education methods that actually present us with solid facts instead of just supposition."

But Linam was not just after facts. She saw herself on a crusade to give children Bibles in their own language.

"I had a sense of carrying out a holy work," she said. "I have invested more prayer, more effort, and more research than was ever really necessary, because I believe in it so much. It can have long-term yield for anyone who loves and cares about children."

Linam's life reflects her own love for children. She has written children's curriculum for the BSSB for 20 years. She served as minister of childhood education at Calvary Church, Waco, Texas, for 17 years before she started teaching at DBU. Her doctoral degree is a practical next step in her lifetime work of bringing the gospel to children, she said.

"What I found at Southwestern is that the professors are so eager to help a motivated student move from the carrel in the library to discovering the ways that research — utilizing the soundest statistical methods possible — can directly impact our ministry for Christ in the church," she said.



Can collection for Lottie Moon

The children of Pine View Mission, Houston, collected and processed 153 pounds of aluminum cans, earning \$38.25 for the mission's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. The children also collected "Coins for Christ," which raised \$134.40 for the missions offering. The children's earnings — totaling \$172.65 — represented nearly half of the mission's total offering of \$372.65. Jeff Jackson is pastor of Pine View.

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YAKM WUDS SYI WACF AW DAETM BACMD,
BYOHY SYAE YUDS YIUCM AW FI, OT WUOSY
UTM KAGI BYOHY OD OT HYCODS XIDED.

DIHATM SOFASYL ATI: SYOCSIT

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Isaiah Seventeen:Seven.

Baptist Record

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